

Education & Development

Labor Relations Academy Launched

In response to interest from the courts, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in March launched a program designed to give participants a deep knowledge of labor relations and collective bargaining.

Developed by the Labor and Employee Relations Unit (LERU) in the AOC's Human Resources Division, the Labor Relations Academy is aimed at chief negotiators, contract administrators, and other court staff involved in collective bargaining. The training is timely because many courts have labor agreements that expire this year.

AREAS COVERED

The academy covers a wide range of topics and includes training in many labor relations techniques. Participants will learn how to:

- ◆ Apply legal and practical knowledge of labor relations;
- ◆ Determine meet-and-confer subject matter;
- ◆ Plan strategically for negotiations;
- ◆ Conduct collective bargaining negotiations;
- ◆ Minimize charges of unfair labor practices;
- ◆ Apply their understanding of union processes and approaches;
- ◆ Interpret and apply the labor relations requirements of recent legislation; and
- ◆ Increase the effectiveness of labor relations procedures and practices on a daily basis.

“The purpose of this academy is to build expertise among court staff so they can be part of a negotiating team,” says Senior Human Resources Analyst Jim Duncan, a member of the LERU team and an academy faculty member. “After the academy, participants will have an understanding of what is required both before and during collective bargaining.”

● For more information, contact Linda Ashcraft, LERU, 415-865-4287; e-mail: linda.ashcraft@jud.ca.gov.

Judicial College Prepares State's Judiciary

For 37 years the B. E. Witkin Judicial College of California has helped to educate the state's judiciary. Named in honor of the late Bernard E. Witkin, a revered expert on California law, the college is a two-week session held every June. Registration for this year's college begins on June 15 at the Holiday Inn Golden Gateway in San Francisco. The Chief

Justice officially opens the college at a luncheon ceremony on Monday, June 16.

Rule 970 of the California Rules of Court requires that new judges, commissioners, and referees attend the Judicial College within two years of taking their oath of office. They learn about different court assignments; review changes in the law; analyze judicial philosophies, styles, and working methods; improve their skills in decision making, handling of parties, and communication; and explore ways to manage court business, increase efficiency, and ensure fairness for litigants.

Mandatory courses cover trials, evidence, the court as an employer, judicial ethics, access and fairness, substance abuse, domestic violence, and self-represented litigants. Elective courses cover areas such as discovery, settlement techniques, drug treatment courts, and sentencing. Instructional methods include problem-solving exercises, panel discussions, small-group seminars, and case studies.

The New Judge Education Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) is responsible for the judicial college and is led by chair Michael T. Garcia, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Sacramento County, who will serve as dean of this year's college, and vice-chair Lynn Duryee, Judge of the Superior Court of Marin County. More than 80 judicial officers, selected for their abilities as teachers, legal practitioners, and writers, will serve as faculty and lead the seminars.

● For more information on the B. E. Witkin Judicial College of California, visit www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/cjer/college_2003/college_2003.htm or contact Deirdre Benedict, CJER, 415-865-7641; e-mail: deirdre.benedict@jud.ca.gov.

Court Clerk Training

The Court Clerk Training Institute (CCTI) will be held July 14-August 1 at Pepperdine University in Malibu. The institute consists of three consecutive one-week sessions.

Attended by more than 400 clerks from courts around the state each year, CCTI offers formal classroom training with an emphasis on cross-training. Classes are designed for clerks who work in the courtroom as well as for those who receive documents at the counters for filing.

All faculty members have experience working in trial courts. They will present classes in the areas of appeals processing and courtroom and/or office procedures for civil, criminal, family law, juvenile, and probate

matters. Written materials for the classes include procedural information, flowcharts, checklists, code references, samples of forms, minute orders, judgments, and verdicts.

● For applications and further information on the institute, visit www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/cjer/ctci_2003/ctci.htm, or contact Maggie Cimino, Program Manager, 415-865-7801; e-mail: maggie.cimino@jud.ca.gov.

BENCHTIPS

Settlement Conference Tips

Recent amendments to the California Rules of Court reinforce the mandate that judges take an active, hands-on role in the management of litigation. For example, rule 222(a) now provides that a settlement conference may be ordered in any civil case on the judge's own motion.

Superior Court of Marin County Judge Lynn Duryee is one of the consultants for the annual updates to CJER's Civil Proceedings Benchbooks. She contributed the following tips for conducting settlement conferences.

- ◆ Read the settlement conference statement thoroughly, and allocate sufficient time for the conference itself.
- ◆ Confirm with the attorneys and parties at the outset that they are interested in resolving the case at the conference.
- ◆ Make sure all necessary parties and their insurers, if any, are present. If not, reset the conference or explain that you will go as far as you can at the conference, and if the case does not settle you will schedule a further conference, at which all necessary parties must be present.
- ◆ To the extent possible, conduct all meetings with the parties and their attorneys rather than with just the attorneys. The parties are more likely to settle if they have the same information their attorneys have.
- ◆ Do everything you can to communicate to the parties that they should take advantage of this “day in court.”
- ◆ If the parties have brought along support people, introduce yourself to them and tell them you are glad they are present, but explain that they will not be participating in your meetings with the parties and their attorneys in chambers.
- ◆ With everyone present, demonstrate your familiarity with the case, solicit new information not reflected in the file, and ask a few general questions that demonstrate your impartiality.

- ◆ In your meetings with the parties and their attorneys in chambers, ask probing questions. Establish trust. Use “we” a lot.
- ◆ When a party asserts that “it’s a matter of principle,” recognize that he or she has deeply held feelings that deserve attention. Use your best listening skills and demonstrate compassion.
- ◆ Avoid giving your opinion. Instead, say, “I’m concerned that a jury might view this as . . .,” or “Do you think there is a risk that a jury might . . .?”
- ◆ Keep the focus on the parties’ risks and benefits rather than on dollars.
- ◆ In chambers, when meeting with each side separately, ask each side to articulate the other side’s position. For example, “What do you think the other side will argue about liability?”
- ◆ Convey bad news frankly, such as: “Several cases just like yours have gone to trial in this county in the last six months, and in every case the plaintiff has lost.”
- ◆ Late in the day, if the parties are getting contentious and inflexible, ask for their help. Say, “What ideas do you have now to help me resolve this dispute?”
- ◆ If the parties see that you genuinely care about them and their case, they will appreciate and respect your efforts and will want to help you arrive at a resolution.
- ◆ If you feel frustrated, take a break. Remind yourself that it is hard to get parties to change their minds and agree to pay more money or take less money. Try to think of a fresh approach.
- ◆ Remember that any movement amounts to progress.
- ◆ Don’t give up. Reset the matter for further conference.
- ◆ When the case settles, immediately put the settlement on the record. With a court reporter transcribing the proceedings, recite the terms of the settlement or ask one of the attorneys to do so. Ask all of the parties and their attorneys to stipulate that their settlement has been fully and correctly stated.
- ◆ Congratulate the parties and their attorneys on their hard work. Thank them for their time and effort.

● These tips will also appear in Section 5.10 of CJER's 2003 update to *Before Trial*, scheduled to be released in June. Judges can obtain copies of CJER benchbooks and their annual updates at no charge by contacting Kathy Pearce, 415-865-7805; e-mail: kathy.pearce@jud.ca.gov.

RESOURCES

Council Releases Annual Report

The Judicial Council released its *2003 Annual Report*, a summary of judicial branch achievements during 2002 and of challenges the branch faces in this period of fiscal uncertainty. The report was issued in conjunction with Chief Justice Ronald M. George's State of the Judiciary address, delivered to the California Legislature on March 25.

The report addresses the changes that are creating a new judicial branch infrastructure and describes key trends in court caseload and workload. An online version of the report links readers to other resources on the California Courts Web site, including reports, studies, and fact sheets.

A companion online publication, the *2003 Court Statistics Report*, provides detailed statistical data on caseload and workload trends, statewide and in each of the 58 counties. It was posted to the Web site in May.

● For more information or copies of the report, contact the California Courts Infoline at

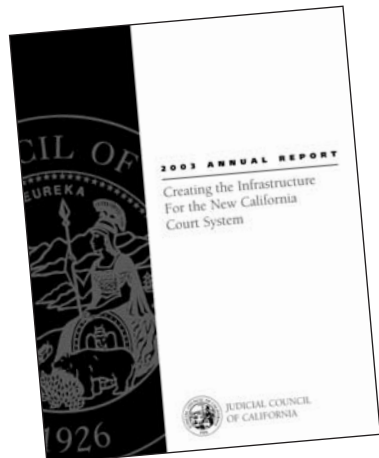
800-900-5980 or visit the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/1_annualreports.htm.

Restraining Orders Made Easier

The Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) wants to simplify the processes of applying for and responding to civil domestic violence restraining orders. They developed user-friendly forms and corresponding informational materials in English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese and created postcards and posters to publicize them. In addition, new pamphlets and videotapes provide family law court staff and litigants with an overview of the restraining order process.

CFCC distributed the new forms to family law facilitator offices, all self-help centers of the superior courts, legal aid offices, public libraries, and domestic violence victim advocacy agencies. The non-English versions are for informational purposes only and may not be filed with the court.

● For more information or for additional copies of the materials, contact Tamara Abrams, CFCC, 415-865-7712; e-mail: tamara.abrams@jud.ca.gov. ■



The California court system's public Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov and Serranus, the courts' password-protected Web site, at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov> continually add information to keep the public and the courts up to date on judicial programs and resources. Following are recent additions.

Expanded "For Employers" Section on Jury Site

An updated and expanded section tells employers everything they need to know about jury service. The site also includes an honor roll of companies providing juror leave benefits. www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jury/employer.htm

Fillable Council Forms Online

Online forms are intended to help both courts and the public by providing an easy way for litigants to complete their forms legibly. All Judicial Council forms can now be filled out online and printed. www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/

New CARS Site

Visit the new Court Accounting and Reporting System (CARS) Web site for updates on the uniform statewide accounting system, designed to streamline fiscal operations for California's courts. Find forms, glossaries, a calendar for implementation in the trial courts, answers to frequently asked questions, and contact information. <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/finance/cars/>

Judicial Leadership Directory Online

The *Pocket Directory of California Judicial Leaders* provides contact information for key branch personnel, along with advisory committee and task force rosters, facts on the California courts, key dates in 2003, and trial court Web addresses. http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/documents/cjd_03.pdf

Forms for Claims Against Courts

Find forms for presenting claims for monetary damages against courts, judicial officers, court officials, or court employees. <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/ogc/>

Serranus Made Simpler

A fresh design and added navigational aids help users know where they are and where to find help. The site's structure remains the same, so users can still rely on their bookmarks and access their favorite pages via the same URLs and page-top navigation buttons. <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/>

Court Briefs

Catastrophe Planning

According to the National Center for State Courts, more than 90 percent of courts in the United States lack a resumption plan—a strategy for continuing operations in the event of a major catastrophe. That percentage is about to get lower.

The "Center Courts" are 12 superior courts in the Central Valley of California that meet periodically to discuss ways of improving court operations. They applied for and received a technical assistance grant from the Administrative Office of the Courts to learn about resumption planning. A training was held in December 2002 in Stockton, hosted by the Superior Court of San Joaquin County.

Twenty-eight Center Court staff members participated in the training. In addition, representatives from the Superior Courts of Alameda and San Francisco Counties and from the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) attended the course. Doug Summerlot and Marcus Reinkensmeyer, two well-known consultants in the field of court security, provided the instruction.

● For more information or copies of training materials, contact Linda Romero Soles, Deputy Executive Officer, Superior Court of Stanislaus County, 209-525-7794; e-mail: linda.romero-soles@stanct.org.

Collaborative Justice Web Site

A new Web site promises to inform visitors about statewide programs and initiatives in collaborative justice.

The new site, at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/collab/, provides information on collaborative justice courts, including domestic violence, peer/youth, drug, homeless, and mental health courts. It also contains a California drug court directory, descriptions of current evaluation programs, and information on funding opportunities. The site offers resources, links to news on Proposition 36, news about training and technical assistance, and other information on collaborative courts.

The Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee and the AOC's collaborative justice staff developed the site with input from the courts.

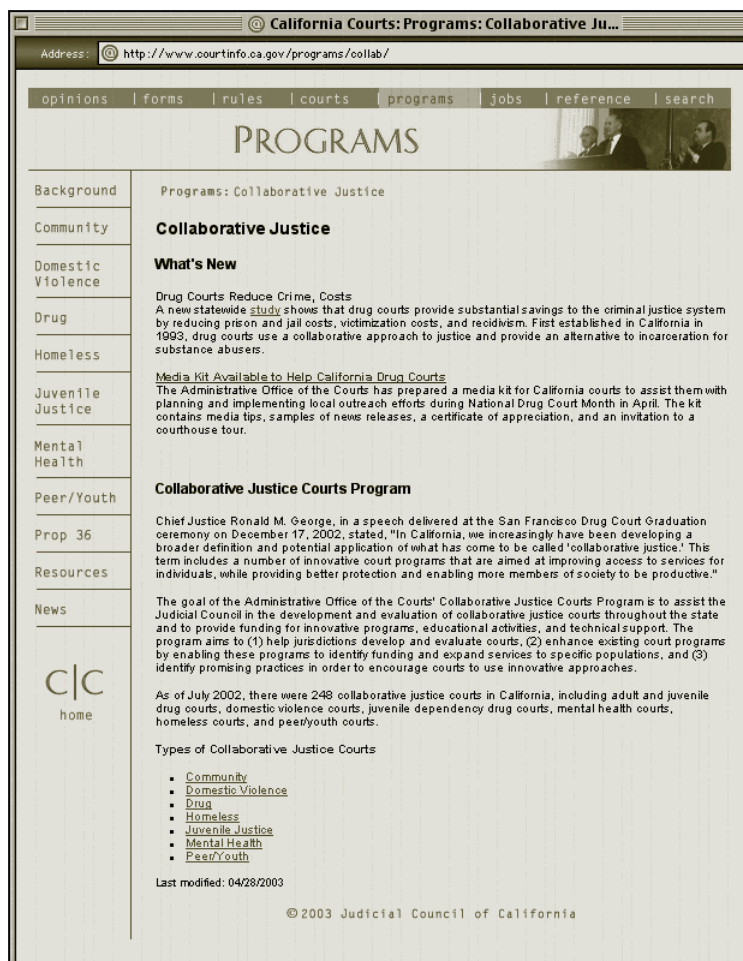
● For more information, contact Lisa Lightman, 415-865-7614; e-mail: lisa.lightman@jud.ca.gov.

SJI Gets Reprieve

The State Justice Institute (SJI) will continue operating for the remainder of 2003 with \$3 million in funding awarded through the omnibus spending bill signed by President George W. Bush in February. The institute had requested \$13.5 million.

Congress created SJI to ensure federal support for state court activities that improve the administration of justice. Since its inception in 1986, California initiatives have received approximately \$4 million in grants.

SJI continues to enlist the aid of its partners in the justice system, as well as past beneficiaries of its efforts, to secure full funding in 2004.



Third-Generation Judge

With her judicial appointment on March 20 to the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, Robin Miller Sloan (pictured) became the first linear third-generation judge in the history of the California court system, according to legal researchers.

Judge Sloan's father, Loren Miller, Jr., served on the bench in Los Angeles County from 1975 to 1997 and continues to sit by assignment. Judge Sloan's grandfather, Loren Miller, a famed civil rights attorney before his appointment to the bench, served in Los Angeles from 1964 until his death in 1967. The State Bar honors his memory by annually bestowing the Loren Miller Legal Services Award to an attorney who has demonstrated long-term commitment to providing legal services for the poor.

Judge Sloan began her legal career in 1988 as a prosecutor in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. In 1991 she joined the Office of the Attorney General, where for the past 12 years she has worked in the areas of correctional, criminal, health, education, and welfare law.



Judge Robin Miller Sloan
Superior Court of
Los Angeles
County

Judicial Appointments

The Governor announced the following judicial appointments in March and April 2003.

SUPERIOR COURTS

Lawrence John Appel, Superior Court of Alameda County, succeeding Sandra L. Margulies, appointed to the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District.

Robin Appel, Superior Court of San Joaquin County, succeeding Michael E. Platt.

David Cohn, Superior Court of San Bernardino County, filling a newly created position.

Ricardo Cordova, Superior Court of Stanislaus County, succeeding Glenn A. Ritchey, retired.

Lisa Mangay Chung, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, succeeding Reginald Yates, retired.

Richard A. Erwood, Superior Court of Riverside County, succeeding Eugene R. Bishop, retired.

Jill C. Fannin, Superior Court of Contra Costa County, succeeding Michael R. Coleman, resigned.

Cinda Sanchez Fox, Superior Court of San Joaquin County, succeeding Thomas B. Teaford, retired.

Donna Fields Goldstein, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, succeeding Keith L. Groneman, retired.

Jack M. Jacobson, Superior Court of Stanislaus County, succeeding Terry K. Cole, retired.

Aaron H. Katz, Superior Court of San Diego County, succeeding Bonnie M. Dumanis, retired.

Michelle D. Levine, Superior Court of Riverside County, succeeding Arthur S. Block, retired.

William Q. Liebmann, Superior Court of Ventura County, succeeding Melinda A. Johnson, retired.

Mary C. Morgan, Superior Court of San Francisco County, succeeding Kevin V. Ryan, retired.

Nancy L. Newman, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, succeeding Pamela C. Rhodes-Rogers, retired.

Karen L. Robinson, Superior Court of Orange County, succeeding Stuart T. Waldrip, retired.

Joseph C. Scott, Superior Court of San Mateo County, succeeding Paula W. Schlichter, retired.

Robin Miller Sloan, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, succeeding Robert G. Klausner, retired.

Stephanie Sontag, Superior Court of San Diego County, succeeding Carol C. Lam, resigned.

Kathleen M. White, Superior Court of Yolo County, newly created position.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

Larry Gobelman, Superior Court of Lake County, succeeding William Jaynes.

Lisa Halko (acting executive officer), Superior Court of Yolo County, succeeding Kathleen M. White. ■

MILESTONES

The Juvenile Court Judges of California named Superior Court of Alameda County **Judge Brenda Fay Harbin-Forte** the Wilmont Sweeney Juvenile Court Judge of the Year. The award recognizes outstanding leadership and effectiveness in juvenile court. It is named for Judge Wilmont Sweeney, who presided over the same juvenile court in Alameda County for more than 20 years.

Judge Harbin-Forte's accomplishments include obtaining a full-time court administrator and research attorney to reduce caseloads, establishing Adoption Day and weekly adoption calendars, and facilitating the construction of a new juvenile hall that includes a mental health unit. She is working to create a delinquency drug court, a dependency drug court, and a truancy court in her county.

The Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association named Superior Court of Ventura County **Judge Henry J. Walsh** its Judge of the Year. The award recognizes exceptional wisdom, patience, understanding, and compassion toward litigants and attorneys in the courtroom.

Recipients of the award are chosen by a committee made up of representatives from attorney organizations and the offices of the county counsel, district attorney, and public defender.

Carmen Ramirez, a senior attorney with the Superior Court of Ventura County, was recently recognized for her exceptional work in the community.

Ms. Ramirez was named Woman of the Year in the 35th Assembly District of the California Legislature for her "extraordinary integrity" and "dedication and commitment to her community." In addition, El Concilio del Condado de Ventura presented her with a Latino Leadership Award for community service. That award honored her for her involvement in a variety of programs, including the court's Self-Help Legal Access Center, which visits the Spanish-speaking community in La Colonia.

The National College of Probate Judges selected the **California Courts Online Self-Help Center** as one of the top 10 probate court Web sites. The site (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/self-help) offers probate information regarding decedents' estates and guardianships for protecting the rights of people with special needs.

More than half a million users visited the self-help site in March, spending an average of nearly 13 minutes viewing its contents.

Judicial Council member **Rex Heeseman**, a partner at Luce, Forward, Hamilton and Scripps LLP, received the Griffin Bell Volunteer Service Award. Dispute Resolution Services, a subsidiary of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, presented Mr. Heeseman with the award for his essential work in establishing the Joint Associations Settlement Officers program and more than 13 years of outstanding volunteer service. ■

News From the AOC

The Administrative Office of the Courts publishes several newsletters about aspects of court business. Visit these online on the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov or on Serranus, the password-protected site of the state judicial branch, at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov>. To subscribe to any of the newsletters, contact pubinfo@jud.ca.gov.

Capitol Connection

Monthly update on legislative issues affecting the judicial branch and information regarding the legislative process. Distributed monthly via e-mail. See www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/capconn.htm.

CFCC Update

Reports on developments in family and juvenile law, including innovative programs; case law summaries; grants and resources; and updates on legislation, rules, and forms. Published three times a year. See www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/publications/newsletter.htm.

Court News

Award-winning bimonthly newsmagazine for court leaders, reporting on developments in court administration statewide. Indexed from 2000 at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtnews.

HR Connect

Monthly update on human resources issues and programs in the state judicial branch. See http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/hr/hr_connect.htm.

Spread the News

Tell *Court News* about innovative programs and services at your court so that we can share your experience with your colleagues.

Send the information via mail to:

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Fax: 415-865-4334

E-mail: blaine.corren@jud.ca.gov



Calendar

May 1 Law Day
May 12-16 Juror Appreciation Week

CONFERENCES

JUN 9-11 2003 Traffic Adjudication Workshop, San Francisco
JUL 13-17 2003 National Association for Court Management Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
JUL 27-AUG 1 Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators Annual Meeting, San Francisco

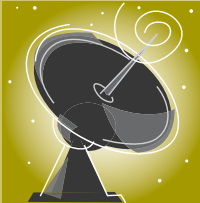
JUDICIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

All Judicial Council business meetings will be held at the Administrative Office of the Courts in San Francisco unless otherwise noted.
JUL 16 AUG 29
The June 27 Judicial Council meeting listed in the last edition of *Court News* was rescheduled.
● Contact: Secretariat, 415-865-7640; e-mail: jcservices@courtinfo.ca.gov.
Judicial Council meeting information is also posted on the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/.

AOC-TV GUIDE

JUN 3 9:00-10:00 a.m., Orientation to the Judicial Branch
JUN 10 9:00-10:00 a.m., California Courts News (CCN)
JUN 17 9:00-10:30 a.m., Sexual Harassment for Managers and Supervisors, Part II
JUN 17 3:00-4:30 p.m., Sexual Harassment for Managers and Supervisors, Part II
JUN 24 9:00-10:30 a.m., Public Access and the Disabled
JUN 24 3:00-4:30 p.m., Public Access and the Disabled
JUL 1 9:00-10:00 a.m., Orientation to the Judicial Branch
JUL 8 9:00-10:00 a.m., Orientation to the Judicial Council and the AOC
JUL 15 9:00-10:00 a.m., Workplace Violence, Supervisors Edition
JUL 15 3:00-4:30 p.m., Workplace Violence, Supervisors Edition
JUL 22 9:00-10:30 a.m., Public Access and the Disabled
JUL 22 3:00-4:30 p.m., Public Access and the Disabled
JUL 29 9:00-10:30 a.m., Mexican Americans and the Courts

(Broadcast times are subject to change.)



● Viewing locations for each court are listed at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/aocvtv/locations.htm>.
For more information, contact Jay Harrell, 415-865-7753; e-mail: jay.harrell@jud.ca.gov.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Programs

JUN 4-5 Training Coordinators Conference, San Francisco
JUN 15-27 B. E. Witkin Judicial College, San Francisco
JUL 13-AUG 1 Court Clerk Training Institute, Malibu
JUL 31-AUG 1 Violence Against Women Education Project Conference, San Francisco
AUG 3-8 Continuing Judicial Studies Program, San Diego

Court Management

JUN 4 Managing @ Court: Becoming a Leader, Sacramento
JUN 12 Leadership Expedition, Session VI, Online
JUN 18 Managing @ Court: Managing Diversity, Sacramento
JUN 20 Leadership Expedition, Session VII, Burbank
JUL 10 Leadership Expedition, Session I, Sacramento
JUL 23 Managing @ Court: Critical Thinking, San Francisco
JUL 30 Managing @ Court: Having Difficult Conversations, San Francisco
JUL 31 Leadership Expedition, Session II, Online
AUG 6 Managing @ Court: Critical Thinking, Burbank
AUG 6-7 Management Foundations, Burbank
AUG 13 Managing @ Court: Having Difficult Conversations, Burbank
AUG 15 Leadership Expedition, Session III, Sacramento
AUG 20 Managing @ Court: Coaching Skills, San Francisco
AUG 22 Management University: Ethics for Managers, Sacramento
AUG 27 Managing @ Court: Coaching Skills, Burbank
AUG 28 Leadership Expedition, Session IV, Online

Finance: Financial Reporting Training

JUN 10-11 San Francisco
JUN 18-19 Burbank
JUN 24-26 Sacramento

Human Resources

JUN 19 Labor and Employee Relations Regional Forum, Burbank
JUN 24 Labor and Employee Relations Regional Forum, San Francisco
JUN 26 Labor and Employee Relations Regional Forum, Sacramento

Computer Classes

JUN 5 Computer Class for Appellate Justices, San Francisco
JUN 12 Computer Class for Appellate Justices, Los Angeles

Note: Computer class students must have a Serranus identification number to participate.
● Contact: CJER, 415-865-7745.

COURT NEWS

is published bimonthly by the Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. It welcomes news about California's courts and their programs, projects, and personnel. Editorial and circulation offices: 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102-3688, 415-865-7740, e-mail: pubinfo@jud.ca.gov

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This newsmagazine is printed on 100 percent recycled and recyclable paper.



COURT NEWS

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455 Golden Gate Avenue
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